

## Nicole Jeanine Johnson Testimony

- My name is Nicole Jeanine Johnson, I am a Chicago Public School graduate, graduating from Beasley Academic Center, and Whitney M. Young Magnet High School, former classroom teacher, and resident of the Englewood community on Chicago's south side.
- I am a first-generation college student earned degrees from some of the world's best institutions like the University of Michigan, National Louis University and the University of Pennsylvania.
- I am also, unfortunately, an exception.
- In middle school, I'd walk to the school bus stop with a young man who lived across the street; he was a few years younger than me.
- Our paths, and fates separated when I went off to high school.
- Today, I am a successful entrepreneur, author, and public servant, having run for office here in the city, and he is probably somewhere in jail or laying low.
- Every summer, him and his friends attract danger to my block that I once felt safe on while growing up.
- I am thankful that we are here to ensure that the elected school board reflects the identities of Chicago Public School students, but I want to ensure that we give special designation to support Black students.
- The images of this past weekend are tattooed on my brain, where Black Chicago teens were seen bashing in the windshield of someone's Tesla, mobbing CTA buses, and randomly shooting into an open crowd
- This is a result of a failed system, and lack of oversight on their well-being
- We can no longer afford to legislate and special initiative in the name of Black and Brown or BIPOC, for I fear it has led to the death of so many of our Black children.
- Similar to the Chicago Board of Education Non-Citizen Advisory Board, I am in support of a standing advisory committee to solely and wholly focused on the success and achievement of Black students
- This committee would cover topics such as:
  - Black student mental health
  - Black teacher pipeline initiatives
  - Black student college and career readiness
  - CPS partnerships to feed additional resources and support from various Chicago institutions such as local hospitals, higher education institutions, relevant non-profits, corporations, to ensure that the burden of the task is not solely on the schools.
- IN 2020, the private sector made astounding promises and commitments to Black Lives, its time that our government, city officials, and legislatures across the state do the same.